

CONNECTICUT RIVER FLOOD CONTROL  
FARMINGTON RIVER BASIN

# **SUCKER BROOK**

## **DAM AND RESERVOIR**

SUCKER BROOK, CONNECTICUT

### **DESIGN MEMORANDUM NO. 6**

#### **SITE GEOLOGY**



U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DIVISION, NEW ENGLAND  
CORPS OF ENGINEERS WALTHAM, MASS.

OCTOBER 1965

R/18 NOV 65 C.E.

ENGOW-EZ (18 Oct 65)

1st Ind

SUBJECT: Sucker Brook Dam and Reservoir, Sucker Brook, Connecticut  
River Basin, Connecticut - Design Memorandum No. 6, Site  
Geology

DA, CofEngrs, Washington, D. C., 20315, 15 November 1965

TO: Division Engineer, New England Division

Approved.

FOR THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS:

wd Incl

C. E. S. Dayton  
WENDELL E. JOHNSON  
Chief, Engineering Division  
Civil Works



U. S. ARMY ENGINEER DIVISION, NEW ENGLAND  
CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
424 TRAPELO ROAD  
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ADDRESS REPLY TO:  
DIVISION ENGINEER

REFER TO FILE NO. NEDED-D

18 October 1965

SUBJECT: Sucker Brook Dam and Reservoir, Sucker Brook, Connecticut  
River Basin, Connecticut - Design Memorandum No. 6, Site  
Geology

TO: Chief of Engineers  
ATTN: ENGOW-E

In accordance with EM 1110-2-1150, there is submitted, for  
your review and approval, Design Memorandum No. 6, Site Geology, for  
the Sucker Brook Dam and Reservoir, Sucker Brook, Connecticut River  
Basin, Connecticut.

FOR THE DIVISION ENGINEER:

Incl (10 cys)  
Des Memo No. 6

*John Wm Leslie*  
JOHN Wm. LESLIE  
Chief, Engineering Division

SUCKER BROOK DAM AND RESERVOIR  
SUCKER BROOK  
CONNECTICUT RIVER BASIN  
CONNECTICUT

DESIGN MEMORANDA INDEX

<u>No.</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date Submitted</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>
1	Hydrology	24 Jun 64	28 Jul 64
2	General Design - Sucker Brook Dam and Reservoir	30 Apr 65	23 Jun 65
3	Hydraulic Analysis	30 Apr 65	10 Jun 65
4	Detailed Design of Structures	10 Aug 65	
5	Concrete Materials	28 Aug 64	22 Sep 64
6	Site Geology	18 Oct 65	
7	Real Estate - Sucker Brook Dam and Reservoir	9 Jul 65	25 Aug 65
8	Embankments and Foundations		
9	General Design - Highland Lake Dam Modifications		
10	Real Estate - Highland Lake Dam		

SUCKER BROOK DAM AND RESERVOIR

SUCKER BROOK

CONNECTICUT RIVER BASIN

CONNECTICUT

DESIGN MEMORANDUM NO. 6

SITE GEOLOGY

CONTENTS

<u>Paragraph</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
1.	A. REGIONAL GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	1
2.	B. LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF SITE	1
3 thru 5	C. SURFICIAL AND SUBSURFACE INVESTIGATIONS	2
6.	D. SURFICIAL GEOLOGY	2
	E. FOUNDATION CONDITIONS	3
7.	Overburden	3
8.	Bedrock	4
9.	F. SUBSURFACE WATER	5
10.	G. RESERVOIR LEAKAGE	5
	H. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS	5
11.	General	5
12.	Impervious Material	5
13.	Random Materials	5
14.	Drainage Materials and Gravel Bedding	6
15.	Rock Slope Protection and Riprap	6
16.	Concrete Aggregates	6
17 thru 21	I. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	6

LIST OF PLATES

<u>PLATE NO.</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
6-1	Vicinity Map
6-2	Plan of Foundation Explorations
6-3	Geologic Log Sections
6-4	Record of Foundation Explorations No. 1
6-5	Record of Foundation Explorations No. 2
6-6	Record of Foundation Explorations No. 3
6-7	Plan of Borrow Explorations - Area A
6-8	Record of Borrow Explorations

# SUCKER BROOK DAM AND RESERVOIR

## SUCKER BROOK

### CONNECTICUT RIVER BASIN

#### CONNECTICUT

#### DESIGN MEMORANDUM NO. 6

#### SITE GEOLOGY

##### A. REGIONAL GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY.

1. The Sucker Brook Dam site is located in Western Highlands of Connecticut, a rugged, maturely dissected region of moderate relief underlain by crystalline rocks. It is a region of rough, irregular ridges and relatively deep, steep-sided valleys. Glaciation has modified the rough topography by rounding and smoothing the crests of the bedrock hills and ridges, steepening some of the valley walls, and filling the valley bottoms. A generally thin mantle of till covers the hills and ridges between extensive areas of exposed bedrock. The valley bottoms are deeply filled by till and thick deposits of outwash which form relatively wide, flat flood plains and extensive terraces along the lower valley slopes. Where not masked by till or terraces, numerous and persistent outcrops of bedrock occur along the flanks of the hills. In the valleys present streams, raised by the glacial filling high above their old channels, have uncovered bedrock in many areas. The bedrock of the region consists mainly of complexly folded schists, gneisses and granitic rocks. The folds trend generally north-south.

##### B. LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF SITE.

2. The damsite is located on Sucker Brook approximately 400 feet upstream from its confluence with Highland Lake and approximately 2 miles southwest of Winsted, Connecticut. As shown on Vicinity Map, Plate No. 6-1, access to the site is available on Wakefield Boulevard, a hard surfaced road which runs along the western shore of Highland Lake from Winsted, Connecticut. At the site, Sucker Brook flows along the southwest side of a wide, marshy, flat-bottomed valley occupied by an abandoned race track. The valley is constricted at the site by the steep-faced ridge which slopes down to the shores of Highland Lake and forms the left abutment of the dam. The spillway is sited on a gently sloping bench on the nose of this ridge. The right abutment rises abruptly from the valley bottom in a steep slope which extends far above top of dam. Both abutments are thickly wooded and the valley bottom is densely overgrown by brush and small trees.

### C. SURFICIAL AND SUBSURFACE INVESTIGATIONS.

3. Investigations of survey report scope were initiated at the site in 1957. Four foundation test borings were completed during this stage of the investigations and the results were presented in Interim Report on Review of Survey, Farmington River Basin, dated December 1958. Investigations for preparation of final design were resumed in May 1964 and a foundation exploration program consisting of thirty-seven borings was completed. One 5-inch diameter boring was also completed to obtain undisturbed samples for laboratory testing of the silt which occurs under the upstream part of the dam foundation in the valley bottom. The locations of all explorations at the damsite are shown on Plan of Foundation Explorations, Plate No. 6-2.

4. Explorations to locate a source of impervious material were made in a large deposit of glacial till located in Area A shown on Vicinity Map, Plate No. 6-1. As shown on Plan of Borrow Explorations, Plate No. 6-7, seven borings and two test pits were completed in the area to determine the character and extent of material available and to obtain samples for laboratory tests.

5. All borings were continuously drive-sampled in overburden and rock when encountered, was diamond-drill cored generally to a minimum penetration of 20 feet. Descriptions and detailed classifications of materials encountered in all explorations are presented in Records of Foundation Explorations, Plates Nos. 6-4 to 6-6, and Records of Borrow Explorations, Plate No. 6-8.

### D. SURFICIAL GEOLOGY.

6. The wide valley of Sucker Brook, a broad, flat-bottomed re-entrant in the till-covered bedrock hills along the west side of Highland Lake, is floored generally with sand and gravelly sand. Locally, superficial deposits of organic materials have accumulated in low sags in the valley bottom. Bedrock consisting of gneiss, outcrops on the valley floor in two areas adjacent to the junction of Sucker Brook Road and Wakefield Boulevard and high above the spillway channel on the left abutment. The left abutment rises abruptly from the valley and is blanketed with thin, variable deposits of outwash and modified till. The overburden on the steep right abutment is sandy till.



## E. FOUNDATION CONDITIONS.

7. Overburden. The overburden in the valley bottom consists generally of sandy, modified till overlain by stratified and lensed outwash and lake deposits. As shown on centerline section, Geologic Log Sections, Plate 6-3, the overburden in the valley bottom ranges in thickness from 20 feet to more than 30 feet. The till extends downward along the bedrock surface from the abutments to the middle of the valley where it appears to be discontinuous locally and outwash or lake deposits rest directly on the bedrock. Except where entirely absent as at boring FD-33, the till ranges in thickness from approximately 10 feet on the left side of the valley bottom to more than 20 feet near the bottom of the right abutment. The till consists generally of variable, silty, gravelly sand and silty, sandy gravel with cobbles and boulders. Upstream from the centerline of dam, the till is overlain throughout most of the valley bottom by stratified silt apparently deposited in ponded or very sluggishly flowing water. Near the center of the valley, adjacent to boring FD-26, the silt is over 20 feet thick but lenses out laterally against the rising till and bedrock slopes approaching the valley sides. The silt also thins out toward the centerline of the dam against the rising till or outwash-covered bedrock surface. The silt was encountered in a bed ranging in thickness from 8 to 11 feet at the centerline of dam in borings FD-31 and FD-40 where it rests on a thin zone of stratified fine sand and silty sand above the till. The silt appears downstream from the centerline of dam in thin beds occurring in silty sand strata near the right side of the valley. The silt where present, and elsewhere the till, are overlain by variable, stratified deposits consisting of silty sands and gravelly sands. These coarser materials apparently were deposited largely by meltwater streams which were flowing into the shoaling pond and in many areas appear to be wide channel fillings deposited in streams flowing on the older lake beds. The finer, silty sands occur mainly in the upstream part of the foundations where the valley widens. These silty sands are approximately 20 feet thick near the middle of the valley and like the underlying silt, thin out against the rising till and bedrock slopes on the valley sides. The gravelly sands occur predominantly at and downstream from the centerline of dam and range in thickness from 10 to more than 25 feet. Superficial organic deposits occur locally in low sags in the valley floor in the upstream part of the foundation. The overburden on both abutments is mainly sandy, modified till consisting of silty, gravelly sand. On the left abutment, the till is generally thin ranging from 5 to 15 feet in thickness and is overlain by scattered, local deposits of outwash sands and gravelly sands. The till on the right abutment is approximately 20 feet thick at and downstream from centerline of dam but thickens upstream to more than 30 feet. Scattered boulders occur in and on the till on both abutments.

8. Bedrock. Bedrock as shown on Plan of Exploration, Plate 6-2, outcrops in the valley bottom near the junction of Wakefield Boulevard and Sucker Brook Road and high on the left abutment above the spillway channel. Bedrock exposed in the outcrops and as shown by rock cores from borings, consist mainly of granitic gneiss with local zones of granite and schist. The gneiss is quite variable ranging from light and dark gray to gray and pink. Much of the gneiss is typically granitic, hard and generally fine-grained with obscure or poorly developed foliation. In many areas, however, the gneiss is coarse-grained with thick biotite laminae in very well-developed but strongly contorted foliations. The granite which cuts through the gneiss in random irregular masses, dikes and thin stringers is also quite variable ranging from normal, fine-grained granite, to coarse pegmatite. The schist, mainly quartz-biotite, occurs largely as gradational phases of the gneiss but locally schist inliers with sharp contacts are found. Although some of the schist is fine-grained and relatively hard, it is predominantly coarse and soft with thick zones of felted biotite. Foliation of the gneiss and schist has a general north-south trend but locally both the trend and dip of the foliation is variable and contorted. The bedrock surface is characteristically irregular with numerous troughs and hollows between abrupt ribs and knobs. Weathering has commonly progressed throughout most of the rock along closely-spaced high and low angle joints to depths of more than 20 feet and along more widely scattered joints and open foliation planes in local areas to depths up to 50 feet. Mud seams and weathered zones in schist or schistose phases of the gneiss were encountered in some of the borings to depths of 30 feet. Borings FD-16 and FD-41, located in centerline of dam near the bottom of the right abutment, encountered badly broken and weathered rock as shown on Geologic Log Section, Plate 6-3. In boring FD-16, although weathered rock occurred from approximately 26 feet to 31 feet, total loss of rock core in drilling from 31 feet to 38 feet indicates a very soft and weathered zone. Below this zone the rock is very badly broken by closely-spaced, weathered joints and open foliation planes to a depth of 65 feet. Similarly in boring FD-41 where rock was encountered at a depth of 26 feet, very poor core recovery and the badly broken and weathered condition of the core indicates that the rock is very badly weathered to a depth of 46 feet and although less weathered below, the rock is very badly broken by close joints to the full depth of the hole at 68 feet. Another area of very badly weathered rock was encountered in the spillway discharge channel at borings FD-12 and FD-20 as shown on Geologic Log Section, Plate 6-3. The weathered zone consists of very soft, decomposed and completely disintegrated schist which extends to a depth of approximately 28 feet. This weathered zone is apparently of very limited lateral extent, however, because it was not encountered in borings FD-29 and FD-30.

F. SUBSURFACE WATER.

9. Level of subsurface water, as indicated by observation of water levels in borings during drilling, are generally at or below the rock surface on the abutments. Seasonal run-off may be concentrated locally at the rock surface, however, or trapped in troughs and hollows in the rock. In the valley bottom, groundwater levels are essentially controlled by the level of Highland Lake.

G. RESERVOIR LEAKAGE.

10. The entire reservoir is inclosed by very high, wide, bedrock hills and ridges generally blanketed with till so that there is no possibility of leakage through low or pervious divides.

H. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS.

11. General. Design of the embankment has not been finalized because investigations are still in progress. Although investigations to locate sources of borrow materials are complete, studies are in progress to determine the characteristics of some of the foundation materials and the type and quantities of materials which will be available from required excavations. Generally, however, the embankment will be of the zoned type with cutoff to rock and will include zones of impervious and random materials with suitable filter and drainage features and rock slope protection.

12.. Impervious Material. Glacial till is available in a large area on the hill immediately above the right abutment of the dam. This area, designated Area A, is shown on the Vicinity Map, Plate 6-1. Seven test borings and two large, machine-excavated test pits were completed in the area as shown on Plan of Borrow Exploration, Plate 6-7. The till consists generally of gravelly, silty, clayey sand and gravelly, silty sands with scattered cobbles and boulders throughout. The till is overlain in some parts of the area by 5 feet to 8 feet of silty sands, sandy silt and silty, sandy gravel. The borings indicate that the thickness of the till in the area ranges from 12 feet to more than 75 feet and, in general, is more than 40 feet thick.

13. Random Materials. The materials from required overburden excavations are variable and overall may be considered random type fill. In the valley bottom and the lower part of the spillway discharge channel, the material from excavations consists of sandy silt, silty and fine to medium sands, gravelly sands and silty sandy gravels. On the abutments and in most of the spillway channel, the overburden consists mainly of variable, gravelly, silty sand.

14. Drainage Materials and Gravel Bedding. There are no economically feasible sources of pervious materials suitable for drainage features in the embankment or gravel for gravel bedding within the reservoir limits. There are no undeveloped sources of suitable materials available within a reasonable haul distance from the site. There are, however, several commercial sources of these materials within 10 mile haul distance. Considering the relatively small quantities required, it is planned that materials for drainage features and gravel for gravel bedding will be obtained from commercial sources.

15. Rock Slope Protection and Riprap. Rock from spillway and outlet excavations and boulders from required excavations will be available for slope protection and riprap. Although there are some areas of schist, which locally is badly weathered, the rock is mainly granite gneiss and overall is fresh and durable. The excavations in rock, however, are relatively shallow and will be largely in rock which is broken by closely-spaced, weathered joints and dirt-filled seams. Much of the rock will break to small sizes and the blasted rock will contain a high proportion of dirt and fines. Particularly in the schistose areas, micaceous fines will be produced and in the areas of weathered schist, the excavated material will be largely wasted. It is expected that wasting and high losses in blasting and handling will offset bulking of the blasted rock.

16. Concrete Aggregates. In view of the small quantity of concrete required, investigation of sources of aggregate materials has been limited to consideration of commercial sources. Investigations of aggregate materials made in connection with other recent flood control projects in the near vicinity indicate that satisfactory materials are available from several commercial sources within twenty-five (25) mile haul distance of the site. Complete data on testing of concrete aggregates is presented in Design Memorandum No. 5, Concrete Materials, Sucker Brook Dam, submitted on 28 August 1964 and approved 22 September 1964.

#### I. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

17. Geologic conditions at the site and within the reservoir are generally favorable for construction of the proposed dam and appurtenant structures. All geological factors relative to foundations, excavations, leakage and natural borrow materials are being considered in preparation of designs and specifications. Although no major problems concerning engineering geology are anticipated during construction, a digest of geologic factors involved in design and construction will be prepared for the information and guidance of field construction personnel. The digest will also direct attention to the availability of division geologists for consultation during construction regarding phases of the work which involves geology.

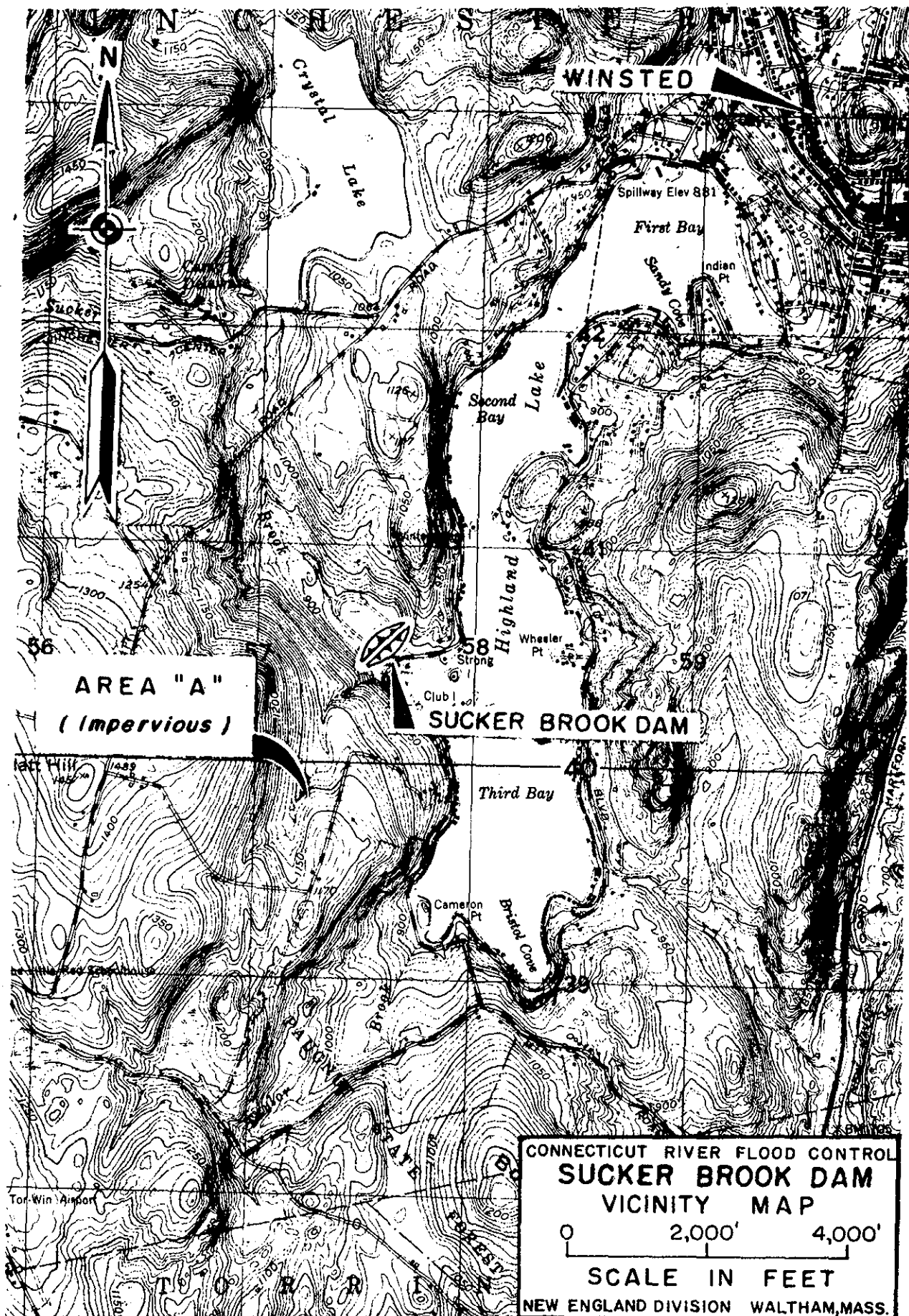
18. Bedrock is available for cutoff at depths of approximately 20 feet or less on the left side of the valley and in the abutments. On the right side of the valley, the bedrock is 25 feet to 30 feet in depth except in the vicinity of borings FD-16 and FD-41 where badly weathered and broken rock was encountered. The weathered rock surface was encountered at a depth of 26 feet but badly weathered, closely broken rock which cannot be successfully grouted extends to a depth of at least 50 feet. Removal of a large part of this rock will be required to obtain satisfactory foundation and cutoff.

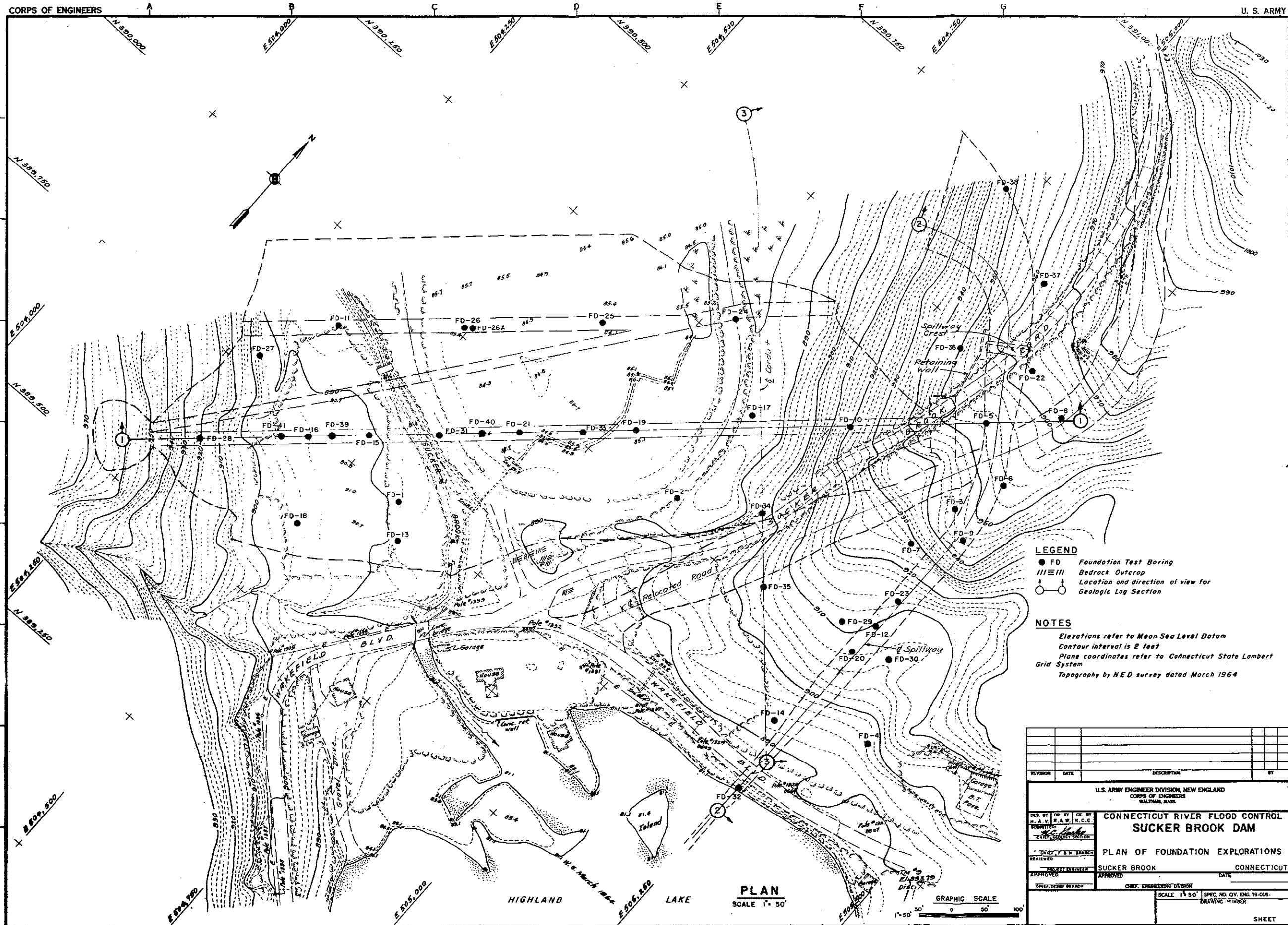
19. A grout curtain will be constructed beneath the cutoff for the dam and at the outlet conduit and spillway walls and weir to assist in control of seepage. Drain holes will be provided as required beneath structures, walls and slabs. Rock in rock foundations for concrete structures is hard, sound and satisfactory for foundation for heavy structural loads.

20. The very general north-south trend of the bedrock structure intersects the alignment of the outlet conduit and the upper part of the spillway at about  $45^{\circ}$  and is roughly parallel to most of the spillway discharge channel. The great local variations in trend and the erratic pattern of foliation in the bedrock, however, make the orientation of structure alignment and bedrock structure of only general significance. It should also be noted that all excavations in rock are less than 20 feet in depth below the rock surface. Although design side slopes of 4 on 1 in rock are considered reasonable, the variable character of the rock and the relatively shallow depth of excavations which will be largely in rock with weathered, close joints and seams, will result in fall-outs and considerable overbreak. For the same reasons, pre-splitting will not be any more effective than normal close-drilling in control of side slopes. Line drilling will be specified locally for shaping final structure excavations. Thorough and judicious scaling will be required during progress of excavations to minimize raveling and fall-out and rock bolts will be utilized where applicable. It is expected that schist, weathered essentially to the consistency of soil, will be encountered in side slopes of excavations at the lower end of the spillway discharge channel. Side slopes in this short reach will be adjusted as necessary during construction and slopes of 1 on 2 will be used for estimates.

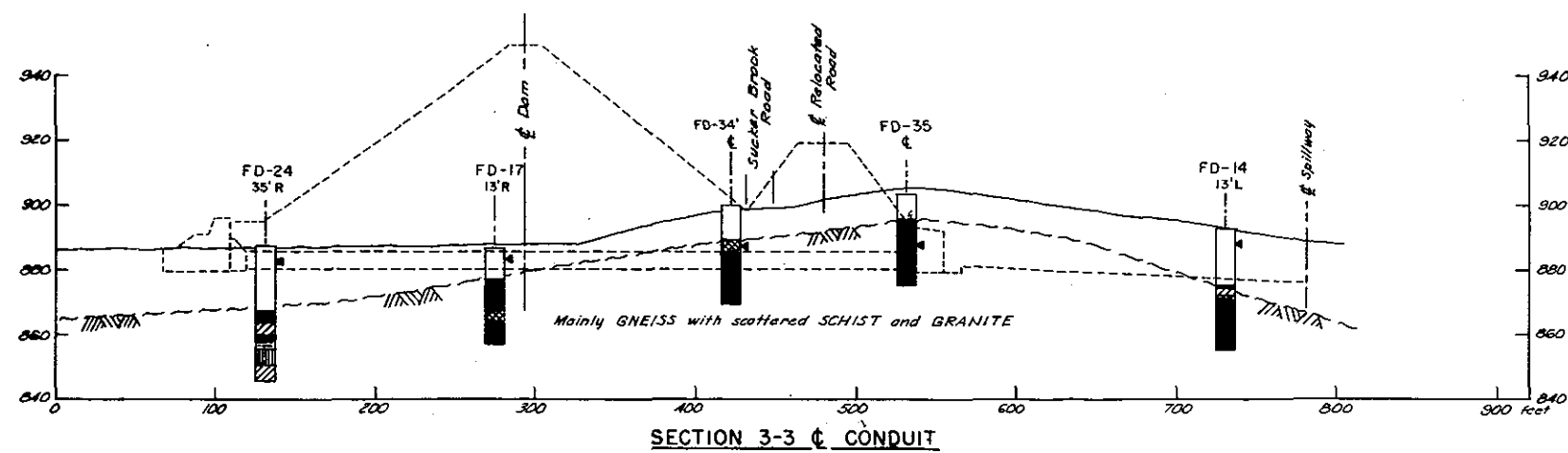
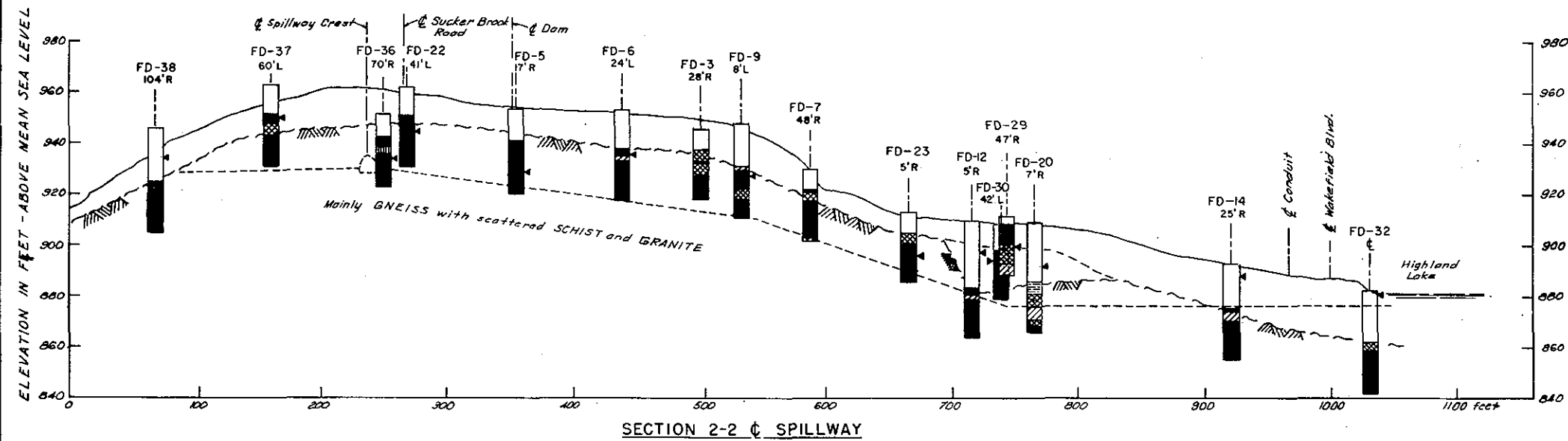
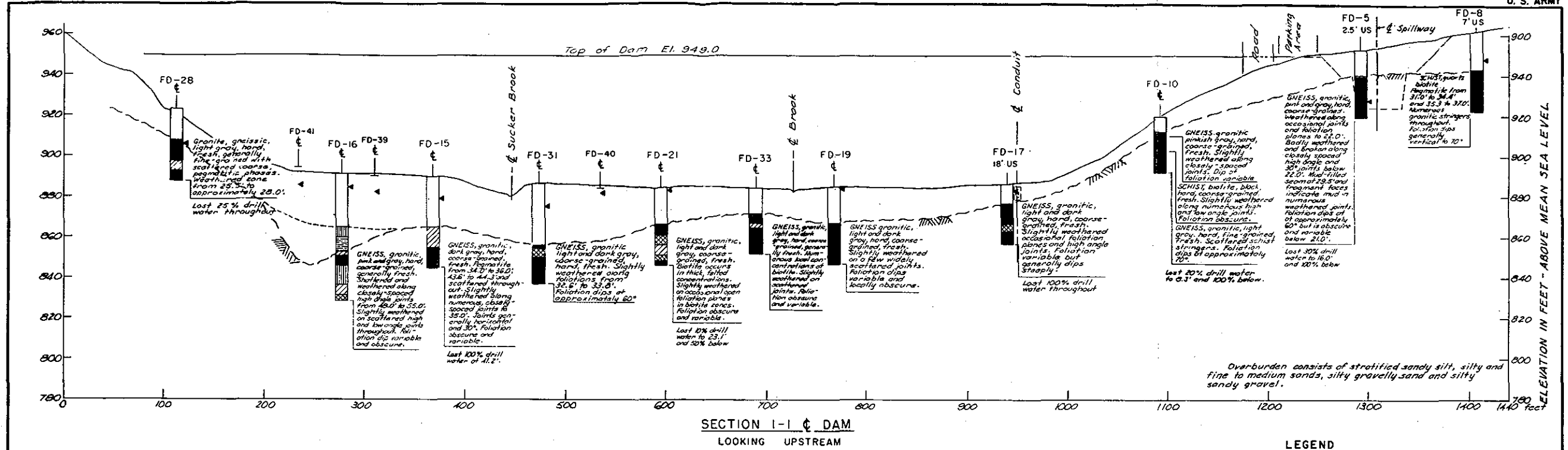
21. Rock from excavations and boulders from required excavations will be suitable for use as rock slope protection and riprap. Because of the local areas of weathered rock and the numerous, weathered, close joints and dirt-filled seams in the otherwise fresh rock, however, it is expected that the blasted rock will contain a large percentage of fines. Segregation and

wasting of dirty rock would be a difficult problem of field control and loss in total volume of usable rock would probably not be within tolerable limits. It is considered necessary, therefore, that the rock be processed over a grizzly to remove surplus fines. It is estimated that the rock will bulk by a factor of 1.4 over in situ volume. Losses incurred in blasting and handling will largely offset bulking and it is considered that, with processing, a 1 to 1 factor of the in situ volume could be used for estimates. If additional rock is required, a few thousand yards could be obtained by excavations in the bottom and along the up-hill side of the spillway approach channel. If larger quantities of rock are needed, it could be obtained by quarrying in the steep hillside immediately adjacent to the northwest side of the impervious borrow area, Area A.

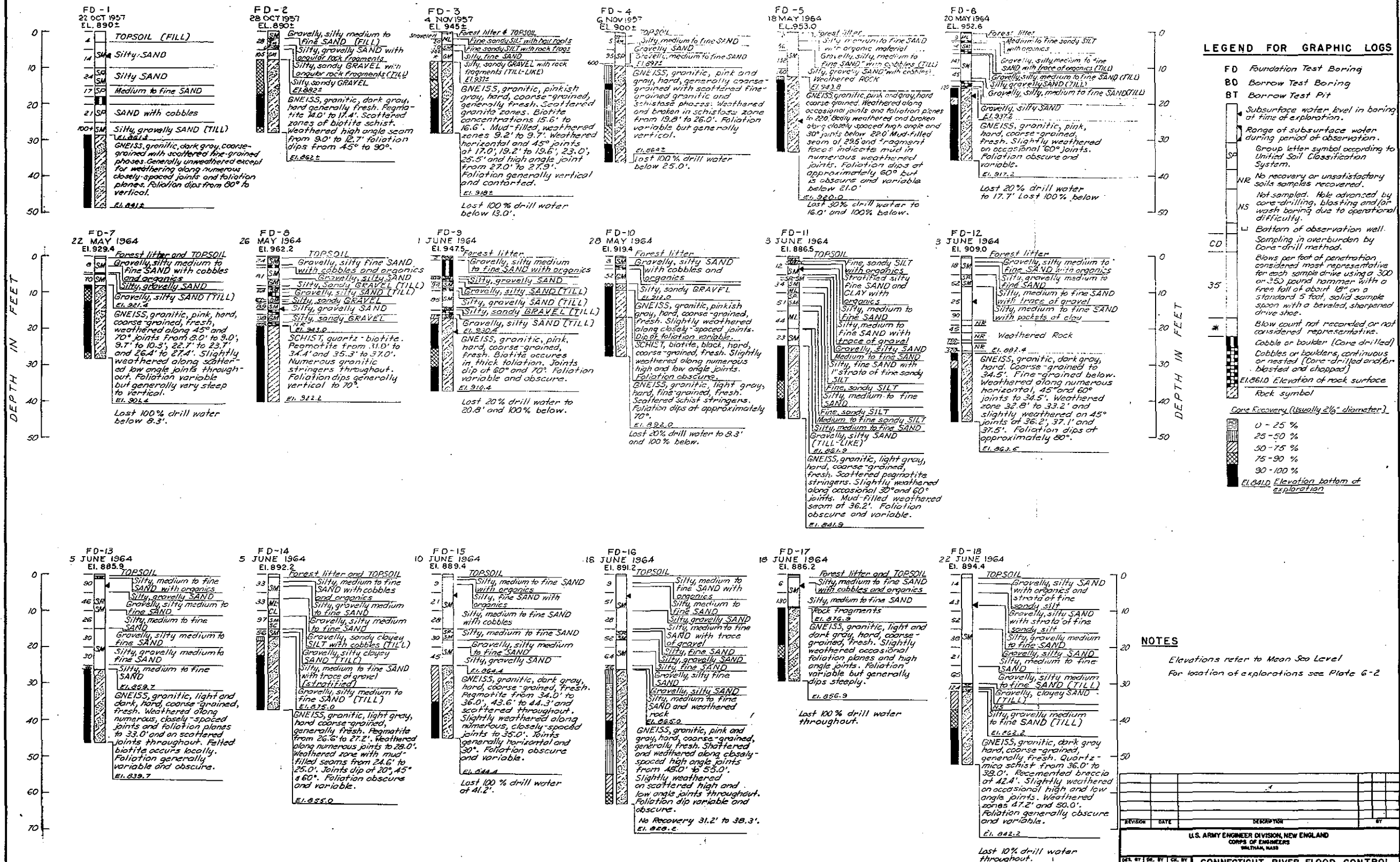


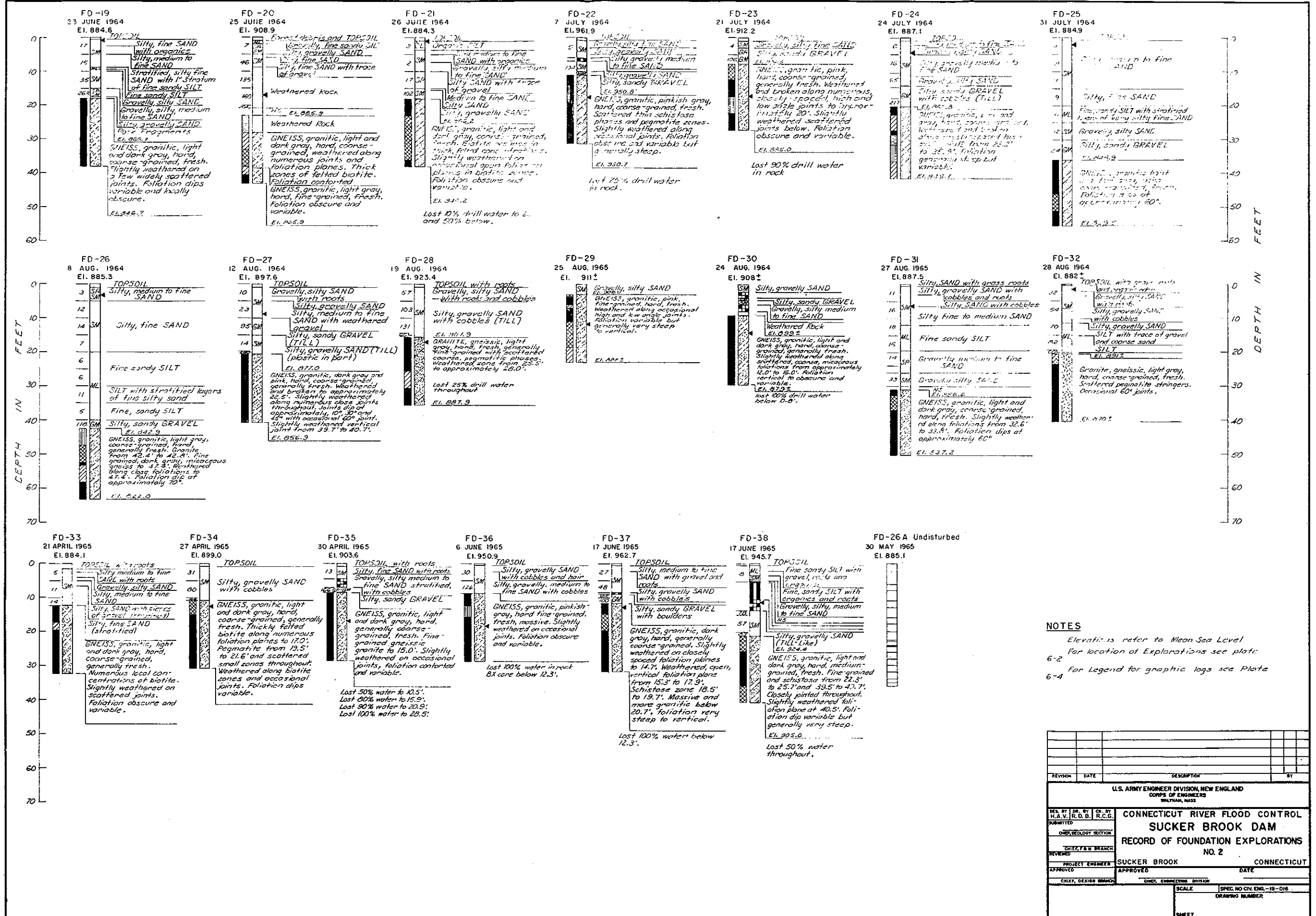


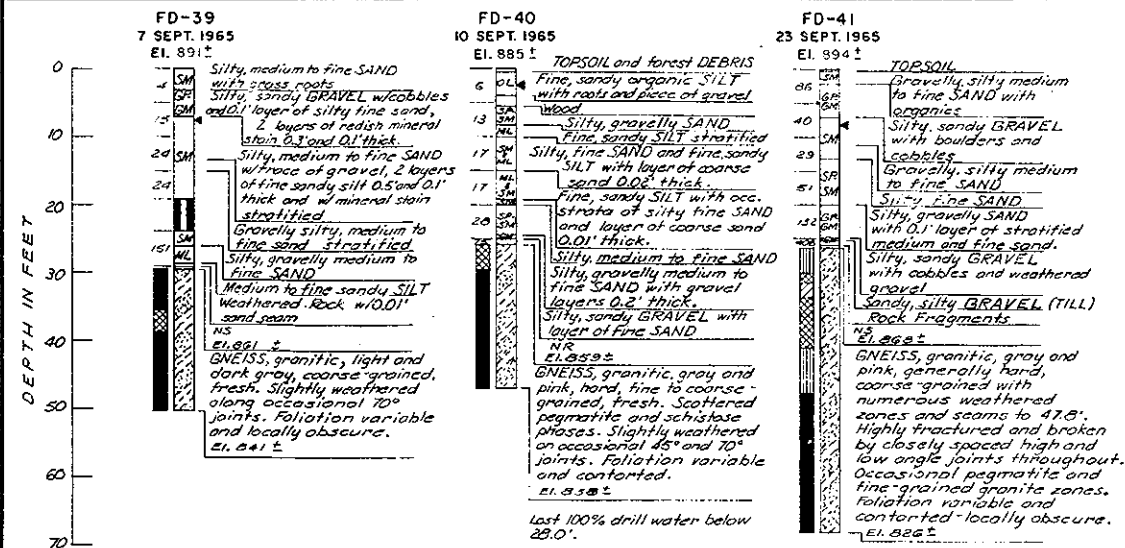




REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DIVISION, NEW ENGLAND CORPS OF ENGINEERS BALTIMORE, MARYLAND			
CONNECTICUT RIVER FLOOD CONTROL SUCKER BROOK DAM GEOLOGIC LOG SECTIONS			
DRAWN BY CHECKED BY APPROVED BY DATE		SUCKER BROOK CONNECTICUT	
SCALE SHEET		SHEET	



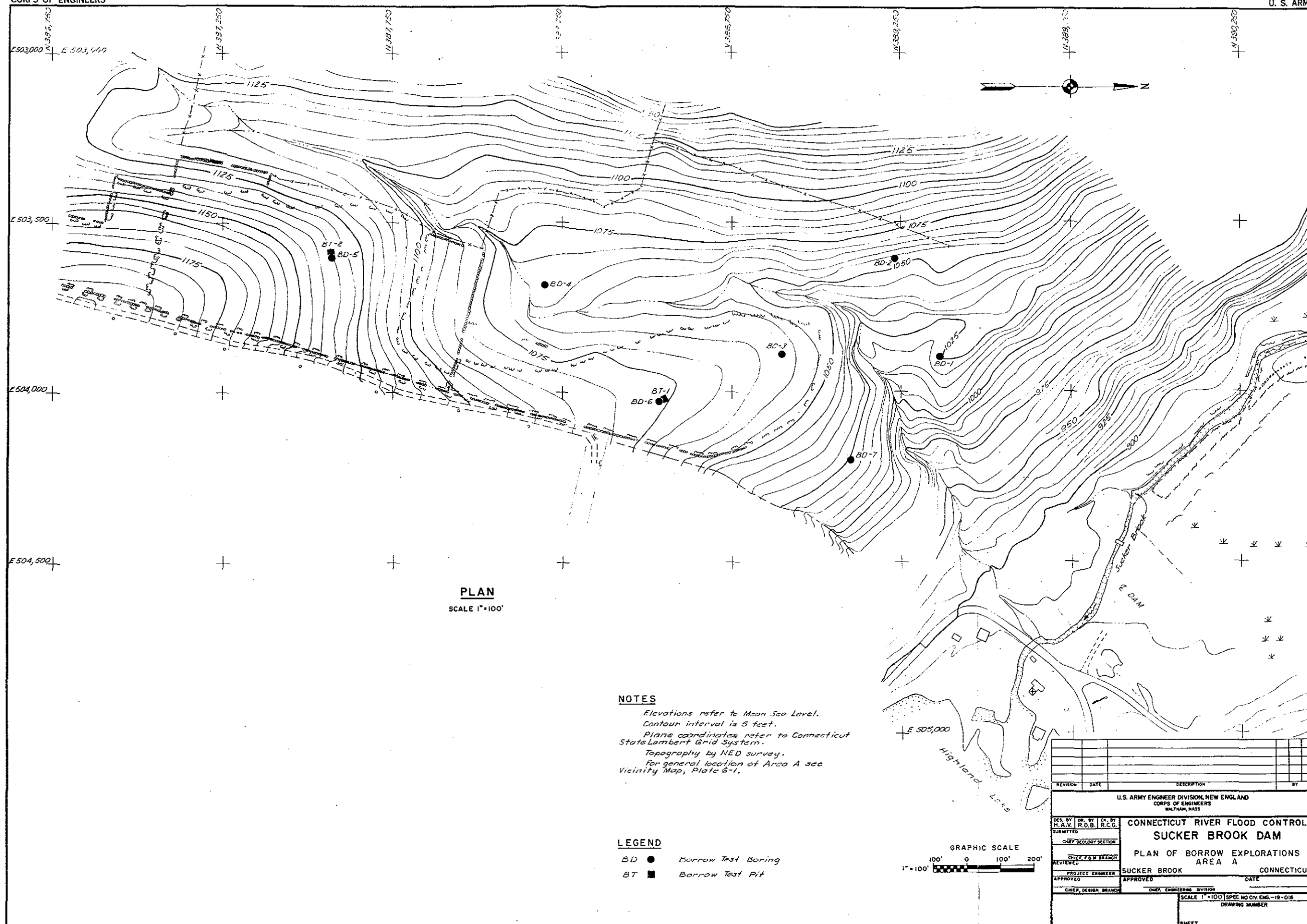


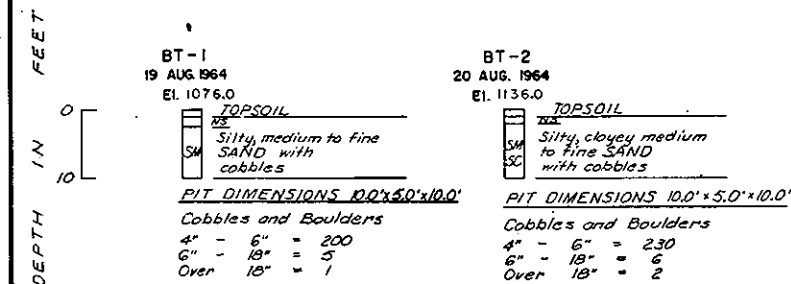


## NOTES

Elevations refer to Mean Sea Level.  
For location of explorations see Plate 6-2  
For legend for graphic logs see Plate 6-4

DESIGNED BY	DR. BY	CE. BY	DATE
H.A.V. R.D.B.	R.C.G.		
SUBMITTED			
CHECK, GEOLOGY SECTION			
REVIEWED			
CHECK, F&B BRANCH			
APPROVED			
PROJECT ENGINEER			
SUCKER BROOK			
CONNECTICUT			
RECORD OF FOUNDATION EXPLORATIONS NO. 3			
DATE			
APPROVED			
CHIEF, ENGINEERING DIVISION			
SCALE			
SHEET			





Elevations refer to Mean Sea Level.  
For location of explorations see Plate 6-7.  
For legend for graphic logs see Plate 6-4.

PLATE 6-8